



The Sunday of All Saints

Honoring the friends of God with much reverence, the Prophet-King David says, “But to me, exceedingly honorable are Thy friends, O Lord” (Ps. 138:16). And the divine Apostle, recounting the achievements of the Saints, and setting forth their memorial as an example that we might turn away from earthly things and from sin, and emulate their patience and courage in the struggles for virtue, says, “Wherefore seeing we also are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every burden, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us” (Heb. 12:1).

This commemoration began as the Sunday (Synaxis) of All Martyrs; to them were added all the ranks of Saints who *bore witness* (the meaning of “Martyr” in Greek) to Christ in manifold ways, even if the occasion did not require the shedding of their blood.

Therefore, guided by the teaching of the Divine Scriptures and Apostolic Tradition, we the pious honour all the Saints, the friends of God, for they are the keepers of God’s commandments, shining examples of virtue and benefactors of mankind. Of course, we honour the known Saints especially on their own day of the year, as is evident in the Menologion. But since many Saints are unknown, and their number has increased with time, and will continue to increase until the end of time, the Church has appointed that one day a year a common commemoration be made of all the Saints. This is the feast that we celebrate

today. It is the harvest of the coming of the Holy Spirit into the world; it is the “much fruit” brought forth by that “Grain of wheat that fell into the earth and died” (John 12:24); it is the glorification of the Saints as “the foundation of the Church, the perfection of the Gospel, they who fulfilled in deed the sayings of the Saviour” (Sunday of All Saints, Doxasticon of Vespers).

In this celebration, then, we reverently honour and call blessed all the Righteous, the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Shepherds, Teachers, and Holy Monastics, both men and women alike, known and unknown, who have been added to the choirs of the Saints and shall be added, from the time of Adam until the end of the world, who have been perfected in piety and have glorified God by their holy lives. All these, as well as the orders of the Angels, and especially our most holy Lady and Queen, the Ever-virgin Theotokos Mary, do we honour today, setting their life before us as an example of virtue, and entreating them to intercede in our behalf with God, Whose grace and boundless mercy be with us all. Amen.

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Dismissal Hymn of the Resurrection. Plagal of Fourth Tone

FROM on high didst Thou descend, O Compassionate One; to burial of three days hast Thou submitted that Thou mightest free us from our passions. O our Life and Resurrection, Lord, glory be to Thee.

Glory. *Dismissal Hymn of All saints. Fourth Tone*

ADORNED in the blood of Thy Martyrs throughout all the world as in purple and fine linen, Thy Church, through them, doth cry unto Thee, O Christ God: Send down Thy compassions upon Thy people; grant peace to Thy commonwealth, and great mercy to our souls.

Both now. *Theotokion*

THE mystery hidden from eternity and unknown to the Angels is made manifest through thee, O Theotokos, to those on earth. God became incarnate in an unmingled union and for our sake hath submitted willingly to the Cross, whereby He hath raised up the first-fashioned man and hath saved our souls from death.

*Kontakion of the Resurrection. Plagal of Fourth Tone
As first-fruits of our nature*

ARISING from the tomb, O mighty Saviour, Thou didst rouse the dead; *
Thou didst raise Adam; while Eve danceth for joy at Thy blest Resurrection,
O Lord. * And the world's farthest regions * keep the festival on Thine arising
from the dead * with gladness and thanksgiving, O Thou Who art greatly
merciful.

*Kontakion of All Saints. Plagal of Fourth Tone
The Original Melody*

AS first-fruits of our nature the Planter of created things, * the world
presenteth the God-bearing martyred Saints in off'ring unto Thee, O Lord. *
Through their earnest entreaties, * keep Thy Church in deep peace and divine
tranquility, * through the pure Theotokos, O Thou Who art greatly merciful.

**THE END OF THE PENTECOSTARION
AND TO OUR GOD BE GLORY**



**The *labarum* of Saint Constantine the Great
which consists of the Greek letters Chi and Rho,
the first two letters of Christ in Greek.**